

THE OLIVE BRANCH:
OR,
The Conservatism of Christianity.

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, WINCHESTER, VA.,
BEFORE THE

YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION,

ON

SABBATH EVENING, FEB. 3d, 1861.

BY

REV. B. F. BROOKE.

Edmund S. Chambers

WINCHESTER, VA.

PRINTED AT THE REPUBLICAN OFFICE.

1861.

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CORRESPONDENCE.

WINCHESTER, VA., February 5th, 1861.

Rev. B. F. BROOKE, *Pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church :**Dear Sir :*

The undersigned believe that your eloquent and patriotic Sermon, delivered before the "YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION," on Sabbath evening last, was so admirably adapted to the *times*, that we earnestly request you to furnish a copy for publication.

Very respectfully, yours,

Wm. B. Baker,
C. A. B. Coffroth,
Wm. I. Rea,
W. McP. Fuller,
C. W. Price,
A. Seal,
H. S. Baker,
C. Lewis Brent,
John Dickinson,
Wm. Henry Harrison,
Wm. Andrews,
John Parker,
S. R. Atwell,
V. B. Sydnor,
F. A. Grove,
Jno. F. Wall,
W. S. Miller,

J. Wm. Walls,
Jno. C. Lupton,
Jno. B. T. Reed,
Geo. E. Senseney,
Henry D. Beall,
Samuel Hardy,
Thomas H. Kern,
John R. Cooper,
Richard Sidwell,
F. S. Bowen,
H. Clay Krebs,
Nathan A. Brent,
John H. Andrews,
G. W. Diffenderfer,
J. R. Bowen,
L. Barley,
R. I. W. Polk.

WINCHESTER, VA., FEB. 8, 1861.

MESSRS. BAKER, COFFROTH, REA, FULLER,

*and others :**Gentlemen :*

I have the honor of receiving from you a communication, requesting for publication a copy of the Sermon delivered before the "YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION," on Sabbath evening last. Thanking you for the compliment, and God for the favor in which the doctrines of Christian Conservatism are held in this community, and in consideration of the fact, that men of all churches and professions unite in this earnest request, I willingly commit the discourse into your hands, to do with it as you see proper.

With great respect, &c.

B. F. BROOKE.



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S E R M O N .

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that publisheth peace."—*Isaiah* 52, 7.

If I should depart a little from usage this evening, you will excuse me I am sure. Instead of addressing young men distinctively *as such*, as is the custom on these quarterly occasions, I propose to discuss a subject in which young men *ought* to be interested, and which might be turned to good account by this whole community.

The *Conservative Element of Christianity*, as a *Principle of Peace* in the world, is my subject. Christ is the Prince of Peace; he *is* our peace; his religion is "on earth peace, and good will toward men;" the wisdom that is from above is first *pure*, then *peaceable*.

I. Christianity proposes to effect a reconciliation first between *God* and *man*, then harmony between the discordant elements of the individual soul, then peace between man and his fellow man. And what a beautiful thing it is that our world has been brought into relations of amity and peace with Heaven. By what principle? By a *great price*, and at a *great sacrifice*! "When we were *enemies* we were reconciled to God by the *death of his Son*." This little world of ours did lift the flag of rebellion against the Omnipotent; did renounce the authority, and defy the vengeance of Heaven; did swing loose amidst the crowded universe of planets, the singular, daring thing sin was making of it, contending with God, entering into the moral fight of spirit with spirit, where the issues and interests of an endless existence were at stake. Aye, it was trampling on the constitution of the universe, severing the last bond of

union between it and the supreme government of Heaven, flaunting the banner of disunion in the very face of Jehovah! and Hell thought it brave and gallant; and the carnal mind was enmity against God, was not subject to his law, neither indeed could be. What then? *Coerción?* No! "I will send the olive branch of peace," said God; "I will give my Son as a sacrifice and a peace offering, who, with his crucified hands, shall lift the world to the arms of my affection and the embrace of my love." It was done! and now those Heavens are calm again as when they poured their serene effulgence on Eden; peace is restored, inter-communication opened up by an eternal amnesty; and now Jacob's ladder touches the earth, and touches the distant Heavens, and the angels, those ministering spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation, are bearing beautiful dispatches to us here; and the very first message they brought was "glory to God in the highest, *Peace on Earth and good will toward men.*" And what did it cost? The wealth of a universe was too poor. It cost Jehovah four thousand years of thought and preparation; it cost the richest gift in the treasury of Heaven; it cost the precious Son of God, the unimagined sorrows of Calvary, the blood of Incarnate Deity; and it was not withheld! Christ came down with the Olive Branch, bathed it in his own blood, and holding it out from the top of the cross, and amidst the agonies of the Crucifixion, he cried—"God so loved the world that he gave his only Begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." O, when will men learn to follow the example of a God, who met man more than half way in adjusting the difficulties between Heaven and earth?

Christianity proposes to impart to the individual soul of man a *personal* and *indwelling* peace, as the law of its order, and the harmony of its existence. The soul is restored to peace, not only with its *God*, but with *itself*. The discordant elements *within* are all harmonized by this heavenly principle which rules in the heart. *Peace at home*, my brother. Religion puts out the fires of that *internal* war, that faction in the soul, that insurrection of the passions against thy reason and conscience:

"It lays the rough paths of peevish nature even,
And opens in the breast a little heaven."

It takes the sting out of the *law*, and “there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus;” it takes the sting out of *sin*:

“The law gives sin its damning power—
But Christ my ransom died !”

It takes the sting out of *sorrow*. One leaf from the Tree of Life, my brother, will sweeten the bitterest cup thou hast to drink as Moses sweetened the waters of Marah with the branch of the Lord’s appointment. It takes the sting out of *death* too: “The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be to God which giveth us the victory.” The monster may brandish his sting but faith blunts and breaks it. Now “mark the perfect man” when and where you will, peace is the substratum of his being, the under-current of his existence; and “behold the upright, for the *end* of that man is peace.” The very “*work* of righteousness is peace, and the *effect* of righteousness is quietness and assurance forever.” Just here let me correct a mistake. Many Christians erect a false standard in respect to the question of religious *happiness*, as if it consisted in *rapture* or *joy*; whereas the true idea of happiness is, that it consists of *purity* and *peace*. Joy is the *occasional* and *contingent* part of religion, but our *peace* is to “flow as a river.” If the river overflow its banks, *that* is our *joy*; but it is the *even, constant current* that makes the river. While in other respects religious enjoyment must be subject to change and vacillation, this is fixed and permanent. Satan may rob us of our joy at times; the battle-strife of life may damp our raptures, but cannot destroy our peace, because one is a *principle*, the other a *contingent experience* of religion. Love and Peace are twin sisters, born together in the soul. Now “who shall separate us from the *love of Christ*? Neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Why? Because love is a *principle* of religion as is peace, not *occasional* or *contingent* as is joy; therefore nothing can separate the loving heart or the peaceful heart of a good man from that which is the very element of Christianity in him; for ceasing to *love* he ceases

to be a *Christian*; but he *may* cease to be *rapturous* and still be a *child of God*.

II. Having shown that Christianity is the principle of harmony between man and God, and is the great regulator of the inner life of the soul, I come now to show that it is the only conservative element in the world, the only peace-measure and peace-maker amidst the contending and conflicting interests of humanity; that the world is to look *here* for the adjustment of its disorganized affairs, *here* in the *conservatism* of *religion*. It will be necessary to *define* the term conservatism, since in this fast age the word can scarcely be pronounced without exciting prejudice or suspicion. If you talk to a man of science, or a mechanical genius, a modern discoverer, any speculatist whatever, who forms all his ideas on the models supplied by the latest inventions; or if you mention it to a man who goes to California this year a *gold digger* and comes back the next a *Congressman*, he will say you are "behind the times and an evident old fogy." There never was an age in which the name was more abused and the thing so much needed as the present. The Conservatism of Christianity is *not* opposed to the true idea of *human progress*. It is peace but not *quiescence*. It is no croaker over the present disposition to lay aside old forms and antiquated ideas when new ones are found to be better; no melancholy prophet recording the gloomy history of future things which may never take place. It holds no sympathy with that notion of some, that society should find all its beau ideals of science and government, and art, and manners, and dress in the models supplied by Noah's Ark; and that because our grandfathers lived in a wooden country and in log cabins, and our grandmothers spun their own linsey-woolsey, therefore we should not patronize architects, rail roads and manufacturing establishments. Nor is the Conservatism of Christianity a mere calculating utilitarianism. What does it *prove*? asked a man once on hearing the *Iliad* and *Paradise Lost* mentioned; another said the only poetry he knew good for anything was—

"Thirty days has September,
April, June and November, &c."

For this was of some practical utility in telling us the number of

days in each month. This is the utilitarianism which would burn up the world's grand classics.

"From Homer the great thunderer
And the voice of trumpet-tones of harmony
That shake the shores of England,"

to the soft lute-like notes of our American Saphos in their woodlands wild; which says nothing shall be studied but what can be "turned over" and turned into "material aid" and practical results, and solved by the sublime mathematics of "*bread and butter*."

Nor does Christianity countenance that utilitarian spirit which would prostrate in the dust all our monuments of genius which tell us the *Fine Arts* are yet alive. Vandalism does this but Christianity never. While one strides the classic States of Greece and Rome, and with ruthless hand and the tread of barbarism dashes down and tramples the world-renowned monuments of art and science, which stand not only to breathe the memory of departed ages, but to develop the god-like ideas and creative powers of the human mind, the other walks through the Temple at Jerusalem, saying "Master, behold what manner of stones and buildings are here!" See Christianity, a lone missionary in the streets of Athens; she looks with interest on glittering temples and altars, gorgeous columns and splendid porticos, magnificent paintings, statues and bronze figures of the illustrious dead, whose eloquence and poetry had kindled the soul of a Paul at the feet of Gamaliel. What does she say as she walks through this colossal statue-gallery? I am come to destroy?—no, but to fulfill. The art that makes this marble to speak, and that canvas to breathe the pictured ideals of beauty which first glowed in the soul of genius, shall live to embody in fair forms the higher and diviner ideas of the scenes of my conflict and of my triumph. Christianity makes no war on the advancement of society in that which cultivates the taste, and impresses the heart by the pencilings of beauty. If the vulgar idea of utility were *God's* idea, why has he made the world thus? Why adorn it with *flowers*? Why *so many* stars in the firmament? Why the *seven-colored rainbow* in the cloud? Why such endless variety in the plumage of beautiful birds, in the undulations of the earth's surface, in stream,

and plant, and precious stones? Why has the Creator lavished upon all nature such ornament and brilliancy? Just in vain if he now introduces a Christianity to wither and destroy in the human soul the very ideals of beauty of which his own hand and works supply the original suggestions.

Nor because Christianity is conservative does it lose its *active* and *aggressive* character. It is peace but not *stagnation*. It is not a pool with no inlet nor outlet, but a flowing stream of living waters making everything about it to live. Its elements are all *vital*. "Go ye into all the world" is its high commission; an angel flying in the midst of heaven its sublime emblem; and it is represented as turning the world upside down, revolutionizing society, renovating and redeeming the race. It is no *dormant* peace, lazily asleep amidst the world's great elements of motion, but a *power that works*, an advancing energy marshaling its ten thousand agencies to the redemption of the world, and is in this sense "terrible as an army with banners." The meaning which is to be attached to the term Conservative Christianity is that it is a balancing and controlling principle, and moderates human action, so as to keep down violence on one hand and prevent inactivity on the other. It is an enemy alike to extravagance and formalism, and holds the balance of power between the extremes of fanaticism and indifferentism in all popular questions. It is oil to the troubled waters, helm to the vessel, the salt of the earth.

But wherein does Conservatism of Christianity consist? I answer, in the very *nature* of it as a religion of peace in its relations to the world. It has been charged with bloodshed, and revolution, and made responsible for all the horrors of the Inquisition itself. But we say no. If such violence is done in connection with Ecclesiastical organizations, it grows out of the abuse, rather the *want* of religion, and not *religion itself*. Read the definition of religion given in the scriptures: "Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law; love thy neighbor as thyself; love your enemies, pray for them that persecute and despitefully use you; as ye would men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Read this, and then say that Christianity is seditious, or is the cause of any rupture of the peace of society. No, my brother,

it cannot be the *cause* of any disorder, but must be the *cure* of all disorders and contentions in the world, when its divine principles shall be accepted and universally practised.

The conservative element of Christianity is found in the *peaceful modes* of its *influence*. It is a fact that the great conserving principles in the physical creation are for the most part, *secret, hidden, and quiet in their action*. How quietly and unobtrusively do those secret chemical agencies work which are found every where on the surface of the globe; but they are there, producing all the beautiful variety of natural scenery around us. Now Christianity is our moral chemistry at work deep down amidst the roots and germs of things in the spiritual creation, moulding and fashioning the surface of that new earth wherein shall dwell righteousness. Look again at the *sea*: its conserving power is not found in its rolling billows, its heaving tides, its eternal roar where "deep, answereth to deep at the noise of God's water spouts," but in its *silent, all-pervading saline* agencies. Now *ye* are the salt of the earth; salt to preserve the very existence of society, to keep the elements of social and moral organizations from rottenness and decay; salt in its peaceful, often voiceless, always unobtrusive, moral chemistry, to work out the spiritual regeneration of the world.

There is nothing in Christianity violent or coercive. The elements of its power are not likened to the desolating storm, but to the influences of mild and gentle airs, refreshing showers, and distilling dews, by which a whole hemisphere is carpeted with verdure, furnishing food for man and beast. It effects its object without upheaving the foundations of society; it allays the evils of the world without rupturing the bands of brotherhood; it carries its banner victorious 'round the globe without "fire, or smoke, or blood-red vapor," because it is the banner of a crucified Christ, scattering in its way life, light, peace on earth and good will toward men. It is the only union of peace and power. It combines in itself the gentleness of the lamb and the majesty of the lion, and becomes an omnipotent charity, an irresistible meekness. This feature in the gospel is wisely adapted to the constitution of the human mind. Man is a creature marvelously made for persuasive influences, to be acted on by moral motives, and moved

by appeals to the tender feelings of his nature. If you want him to submit you must gain his will through his affections. The heathen poet understood this feature in human nature, when he represented that nature in the person of Prometheus, bound to his Ocean rock, refusing to submit to the tyranny of force, though vultures were preying on his unwasted liver for ages. Nor man nor God subdues the human soul except by the power of love. If you wish him to capitulate you must "wheel off your artillery," "reverse your fire-arms," take the Olive Branch, appeal to the nobler feelings of his nature, address his conscience, his self-respect. The gospel compromises neither its dignity, nor its fiercest denunciation of sin and wickedness, nor does it conceal from view the terrible nature of those judgments to which sin dooms the finally impenitent; but while it foretells the doom, like its weeping author, it drops a tear over the hapless and hopeless doomed.

Having shown wherein the Conservatism of Christianity consists, I now show the *practical effects* of it on human society. Take it away and you sever the golden chain that binds man to man, and society goes to pieces! It would be like sealing up the fountains of gravitation and cutting off the sources of attraction in the material universe, and every orb shall dash off in lawless liberty to work its own ruin and destruction. The organic structure of society is made up of extremes, natural, mental and physical; extremes of condition and circumstance, extremes of constitution and disposition, of capacity, taste, temperament, and knowledge; and the wonder is that such differences and inequalities can co-exist at all without rupturing the bonds of union. But christian conservatism has made my wonder to cease. Where it exists in all its force and influence it becomes a great balance-wheel in the machinery of social organizations, and men of all possible talents and tastes, business and interests, creeds and customs, conditions and circumstances, dwell together in one happy fraternity, because religion is a conserving power, harmonizing the extremes of human life. O Religion, thou child of the skies, if thou wouldst dwell with us what a world would this be of ours!

III. The Conservatism of Christianity is the only hope of our nation in the adjustment of its political interests. I speak of my bleeding country, *not as a politician*; for I should despise myself, and deserve *your* consummate contempt, were I to prostitute my sacred office to the menial demagogism of political partizanship. I do speak as an observer of passing events, as a student of history, and as a man and minister of peace. The prayers you offered in your solemn assemblies on the fourth of January authorize me to do what I can in holding out the Olive Branch to you, and all concerned. My brethren, the floods are abroad, and the anxious eye of patriotism looks out upon the disturbed waters to see if the dove of peace bears toward the Ark of the Union any symbol of the abatement of strife, or hope of adjustment. The reason I am for the Union grows out of the moral sublimity and imposing position of America in her *religious* mission and destiny—the influence of this great nation on the ultimate civilization and redemption of the world. When I saw this Union rising up in its grandeur and strength, with its banner of Freedom and the Constitution waving in bloodless pride and beauty over a happy and united people; when I remembered that from the baldrick of our resplendent firmament was poured the light of more than thirty stars on as many Tribes, and every man

“Had his portion of each silver star
Sent to his eye most freely; and the light
Of that blest day shone on his chart as clear
As on the golden missal of a King;”

When I saw how the province of God had kept back the discovery of this land until it could come into the possession of a great christian nation, and then saw the mysterious combination and consolidation of many dissimilar races and antagonistic elements from abroad into one homogeneous nationality at home, I really felt it was *this* that was making up the beautiful charisma of our Republic, and casting the horoscope of the world's destiny; that *this* was the dawn of a day whose brightness was to usher in the Millennium of the Church, the Sabbath of universal peace, the jubilee of the nations! O, I thought that America, from a cosmopolitical christian point of view, was the grandest of all objects, the

sublimest of all ideas connected with the present world. As I read in Eastern fable that the world was a harp, and that at great intervals, an angel flying through the heavens *struck* that harp, and its vibrations were those mighty issues of good which marked the history of the race—I thought that angel, mysterious and invisible, yet present and potent, was hovering over *this Union*, preparing to strike that harp again, and the universe should echo the music of its quivering strings; that despotism, seizing the pillars of her own doomed Temple with a firmer grasp it might be, would only in that last mighty death struggle bring it down in ruins upon herself, and *then* that angel would strike the religious and civil emancipation of the nations! Yes, I believed that American, protestant christianity was the lever by which Providence was to lift the world to its predicted spiritual grandeur. I had no other idea but that this country was discovered for Christ, and this Union built for the spread of his kingdom. Look at the amplitude of our geographical theatre: one sixth less only than the area covered by the sixty States, Republics and Empires of all Europe, of equal extent with the old Roman Empire when her Eagles spread their wings in undisputed sovereignty in all skies of the hemisphere. It was not the abstract science of government only, not merely the justness and grandeur of our constitution as a theory of national jurisprudence, that was pointing to our manifest destiny. Not this alone—but it was the singular and significant fact that *all nations were here* differing in origin and language, it is true, yet bound together in *one grand nationality*, called *American*. We had no Irish American, no Anglo American, no German American, but *Americans all! Americans all!* sworn to support the Constitution of the *United States of America*. On the day of Pentecost there were dwelling at Jerusalem devout men out of every nation under heaven; and they were *here* awaiting the Pentecost of the latter-day glory, the baptism of the nations with the light and love of the gospel of truth, as they were represented in these sons of the stranger sent here for this very purpose, that they might bear back to their Father-land the redeeming power of Christianity. It was this mission of America in her *religious* destiny, in carrying forward the three great moving powers of the

world—freedom, civilization, and christianity—by the moral force which *Union* was to give to this work of sending on to distant lands and future days the light of liberty, faith and example that was so engaging the hopes of christendom, and making this Union so pre-eminently the gift of God. Yes, America, thou wast reserved for this resplendent mission—to accomplish by thy final influence the will and purpose of Heaven in bringing in an everlasting righteousness. God and Providence were on thy side; all powers were working for thee—

“Air, earth and skies.

There was not a breathing of the common wind,
That did forget thee. Thou hadst great allies!
Thy friends were exultant! agonies!
And love! and man’s unconquerable mind!
Thine were the revolutions of States and Empires,
Long ages past, the present and the future,
All agencies—not one was exempt.
And by thy faith thou saidst—
From heaven the clouds shall roll;
The earth no longer be the vale of tears.
Speed on your swiftest wheels ye golden spheres
To bring the splendors of that morning nigh!
Already the forgiven desert bears the rose,
The Pagan lifts the adoring eye,
The exiled Hebrew sees the day break in the skies.”

Yes, the Angel *was* about to strike that harp; but *now* what do we see? *Another* angel spreads his wings on the blast, bearing in his hand a roll written within and without with lamentation, and mourning, and wo! and the voice says—“sigh, therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of thy loins; and with bitterness sigh before their eyes. And it shall be when they say unto thee wherefore sighest thou? that thou shalt answer, for the *tidings*, because it cometh! and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water; behold it cometh!” It travels with the winds, it travels with the lightning. Your Telegraphs and Rail Roads interlacing and weaving a magnificent net-work all over this land, and once binding the whole Union together as with chains of iron, and chains of fire, are now used mainly to bear to every part of it the tidings of

wo and lamentation, and broken fraternities, and ruptured compacts, seceding States and a dissolving Union! Tidings of six stars gone down, and gone out in the galaxy of our glory; tidings of legislative violations of the Constitution in one section, and of uncompromising blood hot defiance in another; of the sails of commerce reefed, manufacturing establishments stopping, intercommunication arrested, or, as one has said, "the only merchandise one section of the country purchases of another, for which ready cash is forthcoming, consists of Colt's pistols and Sharp's rifles, Bowie knives and gunpowder." Sigh for the tidings of the failure of Republican institutions, the failure of man's capacity for self-government, the failure of the American Union, and the tearing down the pillars of the Constitution; and when *they* fall the crash will shake the world! Would this were *all*. But that flying roll comes nearer still, and turns the inner side to view; and there we see more than the prostration in the dust of a Union which was built up by the best patriotism the world ever saw, and which was the hope of Liberty to the nations. Tidings of *Civil war!* which may drench this land of WASHINGTON in brothers' blood from Atlantic waves to Pacific shores! If fanaticism, and ultraism, and disunionism shall bring it on, the horrors of the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror shall be cast forever in the shade; nor has the history of the world ever recorded such scenes of bloodshed and devastation as shall soon come up before the terrified gaze of the American people. Had I the adequate pencil, whence could I draw the colors, or where find the canvas to picture to your eye the appalling scene? Your imagination, heated and affrighted as it is by "coming events which cast their shadows before," nay, the disturbed and ill-boding imagination of a whole nation supplies not the canvas for such a fearful picture. From what sources shall I draw my colors? From the age of the Catilines, the Syllas and the Robespierres; from exasperated passion and raging wrath; from lust and enmity, and unconquerable hate; from embattled legions, and ensanguined fields, and brothers' blood, and burning towns and desolated cities, and widows' tears and orphans' cries, and *all* of ruin, death and carnage that can follow in the train of horrors of Civil war! Hell broke loose, fiends incarnate, Pande-

monium on earth, shrieks of the damned, smoke of the bottomless pit, are the only names by which such a scene can be called or described! And how brought about? By the *people*? By the people who shall be taxed to support this war? By the people who shall fight these battles and die at the cannon's mouth? The people whose wives are to be widows, whose children orphans? No! not by the people. The great national heart has ever been loyal to the Constitution and the Union; that heart shall bear the *burden* of wo, and bankruptcy, and agony, and death, but not the *responsibility*. By whom brought about? By crafty politicians, and designing demagogues, and factious partizans, and hordes of office seekers, who, to gratify their lust of power and lust of gold, like so many insatiable vampires, will suck the life's blood from the Constitution and sap the foundations of this glorious Union. "He that delivered me to thee hath the greater sin," said the Son of God to Pilate; and so this Union, betrayed and made ready for the sacrifice, to be victimized on the altars of a splendid damnation, if it goes, shall turn its dying glance upon these ungodly wretches and say "therefore have ye the greater sin;" and its expiring groan shall send a shudder to the heart of a universe, and the hopes of humanity and freedom go down to the grave of ages. Brought about for *what*? For any sin of the *Union*? Where, in the history of eighty-four years, has the Federal Government passed a single act of oppression or injustice to any State in the Union? For what reason then brought about? For issues which any ten honest-hearted, unsophisticated yeomanry of Virginia or Pennsylvania could settle in three quarters of an hour, and yet for the adjustment of which, Congress—that concentrated wisdom and patriotism of a Continent—finds neither the *way* nor the *will*. The subject is all dark to them because they are on the wrong side of the cloud and symbol of the Divine Presence. The obfuscations which passion and pride have brought over their eyes shut out the light, and for passion they will sacrifice the Union before they will compromise a pitiable sectional prejudice. On the other hand, would there had not been on another issue, thirty years ago, a deep laid scheme to break up this government! And now, making the present aspect of things the *ostensible* ground of secession, one of your

States, like the Red Dragon in the Apocalypse, curling his tail about the third part of the stars of heaven and casting them down to the earth, would fix the fatal coil around these glorious border stars in the firmament of the Union and drag them down at the tail-end of a Confederacy, of which she hopes to be the head. Is it right that Virginia and Maryland should be made the carnage fields, the Golgothas of the modern world? Is it right, and according to the genius of our government, that one section or both should press this immense issue without the consent and voice of the *people* where every man is a *sovereign*? If it is done, what mind is prepared to calculate the consequences, civil, political and religious? Aye, *religious*! With the wreck of this Union shall go down in scattered fragments some of the brightest hopes of christendom, and that speedy redemption of heathendom which God was hastening through our instrumentality as a nation. Dissolve this Union and you put out more fires on the altars of religion at home, and prevent the building of more altars of religion abroad than the combined agencies of Infidelity have done in any century since centuries began. Dissolve this Union, and you throw back the sun of civilization a thousand years on the dial of time, and project the night of superstition on the Pagan World a thousand years more. Dissolve this Union, and you retard the progress of a *world*, because you arrest one of the mightiest tides of influence and moral power Providence ever set in motion for the accomplishment of his designs. Take off your badges of Disunion, as you value life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Nay, put on mourning rather—mourning for your *mother*. But if the Union must go, what ought to be her funeral obsequies? Let that Sun give no light that day. Let the two oceans which embrace her, dirge her doom in measured moans that meet in mid-air until an awe-struck world shall listen and weep. Let patriots of this and all lands come with tears. Let the spirits of the mighty dead and great WASHINGTON descend to close her eyes and wrap her in her winding sheet, and let that winding sheet be made out of the white sails of her commerce, the fabrics of her own industry, and Star Spangled Banners *never* more to

“wave—

O’er the land of the free—the home of the brave.”

But there is one hope left; one lone star in the midnight of our hemisphere; and that last hope, that lone star, is the peaceful, conservative mediation of Virginia. Her peace measure, inaugurated, not in the spirit of political partizanship, but in the spirit of religious and godly conservatism, is the last hope of the struggling Union. O, I see that conservatism as she stands on the deck of the Ship of State, with CRITTENDEN by her side holding fast the flag-staff of the Union; the storm rages, the tempest sweeps along the deep, and the yesty waves of contending factions roll in upon her on every side, yet there she stands and pleads with the North to give up, and with the South not to keep back; and with a majesty surpassed only by that of the Son of God on deep Galilee, she says to these raging elements, "peace, be still." I trust in God the winds and waves will obey and there shall be a great calm. And if it shall be so, it will be like the remarshaling the very stars in their courses, and the restoration of a disturbed gravitation and attraction to a universe, and the nations again shall listen to more than "the *fabled* music of the spheres." If it shall be so, then shall the wounds of this great confederacy be healed, and our love and common patriotism be the stronger by reason of the fiery ordeal through which we have passed; then shall we as a christian nation, reorganizing our forces against sin, and infidelity, and paganism, and despotism, and every form of tyranny over the human mind, be ready to enter again upon our high historic mission, going forth to our predestined work, the spiritual and civil redemption of the nations. Then shall the blessed reign of peace come *a thousand years sooner*; then shall the Temple of Janus be closed not only at Rome, but in every walled town and war-station on the globe; the watch fires of revolution be put out on every mountain top and the war cry hushed in every valley; brothers' blood no more stain the friendly earth, nor the welkin ring with the shock of battle, but

"Peace o'er the world her olive wand extend
And white robed Innocence from heaven descend."

"For a King shall reign in righteousness, and Princes rule in judgment; the nations shall learn war no more; they shall beat

their swords into plough-shares and their spears into pruning hooks; and the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my Holy Mountain, for the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea." Yes, it shall come, for God has promised it; it shall come, for Christ *must* reign till he hath put *all* enemies under his feet. The shout shall ascend over Continent, and Seas, and Isle, heard all along the paths of sound until it thrills the Gates of Light—*now is come Salvation, and strength, and the Kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ, for the accuser of the brethren is cast down, and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.* It shall come: but let American Protestant Christianity remember, that she bears the *fearful responsibility*, as she is *vested* with the *awful power of retarding or hastening it a thousand years.*

Div. S!

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